WELCOME BACK, ‘GAME OF THRONES’

HERE’S WHAT YOU MISSED FROM LAST NIGHT’S PREMIERE. PAGES 22-23

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Failure to launch

A bizarre season. The Flyers 2014-15 season was characterized by spectacularly inconsistent play and by weaknesses large enough to keep them out of the Stanley Cup Playoffs for the second time in three seasons.

PAGES 32-33

The Flyers may have been mediocre this season, but they have a bright future ahead of them. / GETTY IMAGES

Feds nab Jewelers’ Row kidnap suspect

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Clinton launches White House bid

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3 'Study shows subway air samples include human skin'

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Fans turn from screens to board and card games

Let the games begin. Some people are turning away from video games toward Candyland and Cards Against Humanity.

Above, Nat Cauldwell, with son Wyatt, 5 and Smith Loucas, 5, play Harry Potter, Mystery at Hogwarts at the Philadelphia Free School's Tabletop Day event. Below, gamers play at Redcaps Corner, where a large crowd turned out to play board games for International Tabletop Day on Saturday.

DAN KELLEY, ADAM FRIEDMAN, REDCAP'S CORNER

When Justin Becker moved into a new home in South Philadelphia, he set the TV and video games in the unfinished basement, leaving his three children free to go down and watch when they wanted. The board games stayed upstairs in the living room.

It was all part of a subtle trick that he hoped would help his family connect.

"Television and video games are more like solo activities," Becker said. "We lost out on quality time and we saw this as a chance to start over in the new house."

Becker, a 30-year-old stay-at-home dad with three children — ages 7, 4 and 2 — is part of what appears to be a growing trend of people turning to so-called tabletop games as a social alternative to screen time.

Last year, attendance at the Origins Game Fair run by the Game Manufacturers Association grew by 13 percent to 39,000, said John Ward, the trade association's executive director.

Ward says simple economics are also a factor. "You can buy a couple of cool board games for $20 or $40," he says. "You can't take your family to the movies at that price."

Adam Friedman, the owner of two stores devoted to tabletop games in University City — both called Redcap's Corner — said the social aspect of gaming helps keep him ahead of Amazon with popular sellers including Coup, Star Realms and Settlers of Catan.

"Sales are as strong as they ever were," Friedman said.

The stores feature rows of seating for people to play games, all for free. That drives retail sales at prices that online sellers can beat.

"Amazon doesn't give people space to play the games," Friedman said. "We're more of an event space than we are a retail center."

The number of new stores like Redcap's is rising at the same pace in recent years and existing retailers are staying open longer.

At the Philadelphia Free School, a private school that gives children wide latitude to develop their own education, games are built into the curriculum.

"To us, it's not just recreation," says Michelle Loucas, a founder of the school and parent of one of its students. "Human beings benefit from playing in really substantial ways." REUTERS

Table games' comeback?

Hasbro Inc., maker of old standbys like Monopoly and Risk, says that revenue for its line of games increased 10 percent between 2012 and 2013, and would have grown 7 percent in 2014 if not for unfavorable foreign currency conversions.

- Anecdotal reports also point toward an upswing. Insiders say publishers devoted to the games are flourishing, thanks to access to crowdsourced financing and the proven popularity of games like Settlers of Catan.

Quoted

"There's something special about having those cardboard pieces in your hand, playing with somebody you are having a conversation with."

Simon Joseph, board game fan

Crime. School says former teacher molested at least 11

Richard Smith, 67, a former teacher at Episcopal Academy, molested at least 11 students in the late 1970s and early 1980s, according to a letter sent Friday to the school's alumni.

Smith was arrested on child sex abuse charges in April 2013 in Massachusetts.

The Newtown Square school says in its letter to alumni that it contacted Smith's former students after his arrest in Massachusetts, using former prosecutors who are experts on child abuse to conduct its investigation.

They have turned over the results to authorities in Chester, Montgomery and Delaware counties in Pennsylvania, as well as those in Massachusetts.

In October 2013, Smith was arrested in Pennsylvania on child pornography charges. Those charges are still pending.

Quoted

"On behalf of Episcopal Academy and the Board of Trustees, we extend our deepest apologies to the students and families who were harmed."

T.J. Locke and Edward H. Vick, heads of school

Though he stopped teaching in 1990, Smith continued to work as a part-time development associate through 1998.

The Cape and Islands district attorney in Massachusetts charged Smith with the rape of a child and related offenses involving four children, which allegedly occurred at Camp Good News, located on Cape Cod in 1981.

Smith attempted to plead guilty to those charges on Thursday, but the judge in the case declined to accept terms of the plea deal.

Smith was arrested in Massachusetts as part of a long-running investigation into allegations of sex abuse involving up to nine perpetrators at the camp. He was the only person charged in that investigation.

DAN KELLEY

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Because different security systems save footage for different lengths of time, waiting too long after your fall to report it, may mean the security footage of your fall has been lost.

Businesses install cameras to protect themselves. If you suffer a fall due to a defective condition the business neglected to fix, their cameras may be your best friend.

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Street talk

DAVE WARNER
METRO COLUMNIST/ VETERAN NEWSMAN
Dave Warner tackles Philadelphia metropolitan issues. Email Dave at EditExpress@verizon.net.

First, you got your Phillies, where the best your hope can do this season is flicker, and that's when you're feeling optimistic.

Then you got your Sixers and Flyers, and to see how they're doing, turn to the standings, and go down to the bottom part of the list.

Which leaves the Eagles, who absent much else, tend to dominate fan discussion in the offseason because of a shakeup in the lineup, and the acquisition of a quarterback who has sent us to the medical dictionaries to learn about torn ACLs.

You can find it under "Not a good thing."

Withal, then, Philadelphia is putting to a severe test the words of poet Alexander Pope that hope springs eternal in the human breast.

If you're feeling gloomy about all that, you're not alone. Experts say such things can sink the spirits of an entire community.

Really, remember how good we all felt when the Phillies did everything right to win the World Series in '08?

Well, now the oddsmakers in Vegas are saying this year's team has the longest odds in all of baseball to win the series, 150-1.

Put that together with our other sports woes, and it can lead to whatever the opposite of feeling good is.

We have the thoughts of an expert on this, Robert Cialdini, professor emeritus of psychology and marketing at Arizona State University.

"What sports teams represent, they represent communities," he told Metro. "And members of those communities feel that they are just not represented by those teams, they are elevated by their successes and diminished by their failures."

At the same time, Cialdini says it's not completely rational to

Eagles fans watch a practice session at UPenn's Franklin Field. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

feel that much passion for players who are essentially mercenaries — they are pros, brought to our city by career and big paychecks.

Which is to say, they are not really of us.

He speculates that all of this dates back in history to a time when small villages had their own warriors, to battle those in other small villages.

If your guys won, then, it meant that your village was superior to the other village.

"That is what has persisted," he said, "that sense of feeling entitled to the glory of one of our sports teams' victories."

Of course, there's a flip side too: We feel diminished if our team loses.

Sound familiar?

Think about the language you use about your team too — the good professor says it's common for fans to say "we won" after a victory, but "they lost" after a defeat.

All of that rings true, but it's not all gloom either.

Bob Thompson is an expert in popular culture at Syracuse University, and figures that at least the image of big cities like Philly doesn't take a hit with losing teams.

In smaller cities, winning teams are central to their identity.

Not so for towns like Philly, though, he says.

"You've got a lot of other elements to lean on," he said.

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Philadelphia

Suspect in Jewelers' Row kidnapping nabbed over weekend

Police on Friday nabbed a suspect in the kidnapping and torture of a Jewelers' Row worker at a South Carolina hotel.

Khayree Gay, 31, who was previously busted in 2008 for trafficking heroin out of Philadelphia, was arrested by ATF agents.

But two other men suspected of pulling a female Jewelers' Row worker into a minivan and tasing her seven times while demanding she provide the combination to get into her employers' safe are still wanted.

Khayree Gay
PROVIDED

The victim, 53, was grabbed around 4 p.m. April 4 near 7th and Chestnut streets, zip-tied, hooded and told she would be murdered if she did not provide safety codes.

The three kidnappers used her debit card at a Wawa and Chinese restaurant before dumping her in a Darby Township cemetery. METRO

Abandoned. Woman left quadriplegic son in woods, police say

A mother abandoned her quadriplegic son in a wooded area of a Philadelphia park for nearly a week so she could visit her boyfriend in Maryland, police said.

The 21-year-old disabled man was found by a passerby on Friday night lying on leaves and covered by blankets with his wheelchair and Bible nearby, said Philadelphia police Lieutenant John Walker.

Police said the man who was abandoned in the woods is unable to talk and suffers from cerebral palsy.

Walker said authorities plan to file charges of aggravated assault and failure to care for a dependent person against the mother, who NBC identified as 41-year-old Nyia Parler, who also has a 16-year-old son.

She is still in Maryland, Walker said.

Investigators believe the quadriplegic man may have been stuck in the woods since Monday. Officials at the school he attends became alarmed when he did not attend last week, and they called the man's mother and aunt. The aunt reported the man missing on Tuesday, police said.

"This kid cannot defend himself, he cannot function at all," Walker said at a news conference. "It could have been a lot worse than it is."

The man was taken to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to be treated for dehydration, malnutrition, exposure and a cut on his back. REUTERS

Bad mother

After police located the disabled man in the woods they called Parler in Maryland, who lied to police and claimed that her disabled son was safe and with her and her boyfriend, NBC reported.

- Police in the Maryland county where Parler is located have also contacted her.

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Kids get a look at the creatures behind 'Game of Thrones'

Tracey Bonds holds open a Nile Crocodile skull at a "Game of Thrones"-inspired day of activities at the Academy of Natural Sciences on Sunday. Kids saw animals and fossils that inspired creatures on the HBO show. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

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Family beat homeless man at gas station

Assault. Cops seek to identify the posse who attacked a homeless man.

Police released video Friday of the shocking beating of a homeless man by several family members at a Sunoco gas station at 5th Street and Tabor Road in Olney in a bid to identify more suspects.

The victim, 51, is in a medically induced coma due to injuries he suffered.

The assault occurred April 7 and was reportedly prompted after a 10-year-old boy who was pumping gas at the station for change from customers told his family the homeless man, who was there performing similar work, had struck him.

Police said there was no evidence the man ever hit the boy.

But the family still sought retribution.

Surveillance footage shows six assailants pour out of a minivan and assault the man for 30 seconds before fleeing, using mace, a hammer, and a piece of a rocking chair.

The boy's mother, Aleathea Gillard, 34, and neighbor, Sharina Joachim, 24, are charged with attempted murder and aggravated assault, reports said.

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A suspect carries a piece of a rocking chair in a video of the attack. / PPD

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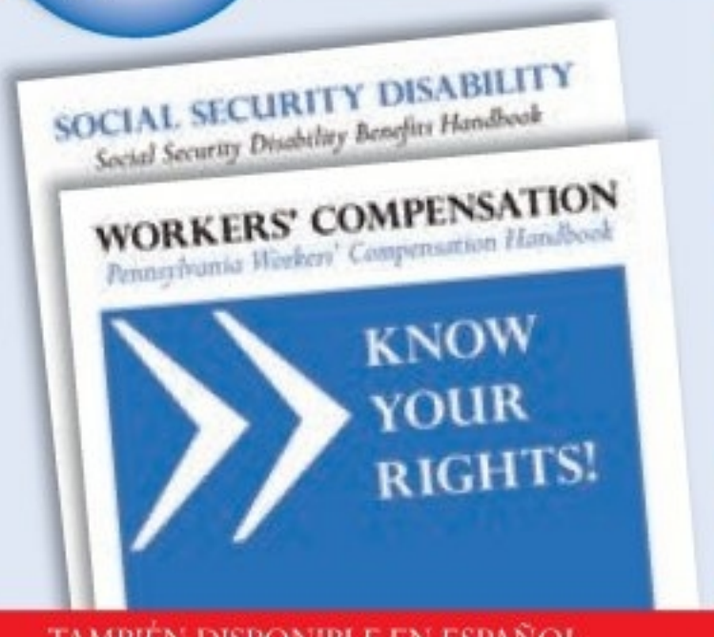

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Philadelphia

Cosby won't be at Temple graduation

Bill Cosby
GETTY IMAGES

Bill Cosby, who resigned his position as a member of Temple University's Board of Trustees, won't be attending commencement ceremonies this year.

It's the latest blow as the comedian and Feltonville resident's reputation withers under a cloud of suspicions over sexual assault accusations.

More than a dozen women have publicly accused Cosby of sexual misconduct in recent months, in a controversy that has tarnished the image of the actor and comedian best known as the lovable father figure on the 1980s sitcom "The Cosby Show." METRO

Gorgeous sunshine

Robert Zlat lifts his daughter Danielle Gonzalez, 6, in the air at the fountain at Logan Square on one of the first warm and sunny days of the year on Sunday. Forecasters project the rest of the week will stay nice and warm, but there's a chance of rain on Tuesday. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

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Clinton announces White House bid

Democrat. This will be the second presidential campaign for Hillary Clinton.

The campaign stickers are ready. / GETTY IMAGES

Hillary Clinton cast herself as a champion for everyday Americans on Sunday, kicking off her long-awaited second run for the White House with a vow to fight for a level playing field for those recovering from tough economic times.

Clinton, who begins the 2016 presidential race as a commanding Democratic front runner, entered the fray with a video announcement in which she said the economic deck was still stacked for those at the top.

"Everyday Americans need a champion, and I want to be that champion, and I want to be that champion," she said in the video, which was posted on her new website on Sunday afternoon. "So you can do more than just get by, you can get ahead. And stay ahead."

Quoted

"Everyday Americans need a champion, and I want to be that champion."
Clinton

Clinton, who lost a bruising Democratic nominating battle to Barack Obama in 2008, said in a tweet that she would be traveling to Iowa, the state that holds the kickoff contest in the parties' nominating process in early 2016.

Clinton's campaign will emphasize her plans to address economic inequality and will tout the historic nature of her effort to become the first woman U.S. president, aides said.

One of the biggest challenges for a woman who has been one of the most famous figures in the United States since the early 1990s, will be to show a more down-to-earth side while connecting with ordinary voters.

Critics, including liberals in her own party, say she has grown out of touch after decades as the wife of former President Bill Clinton, a senator and secretary of state. REUTERS

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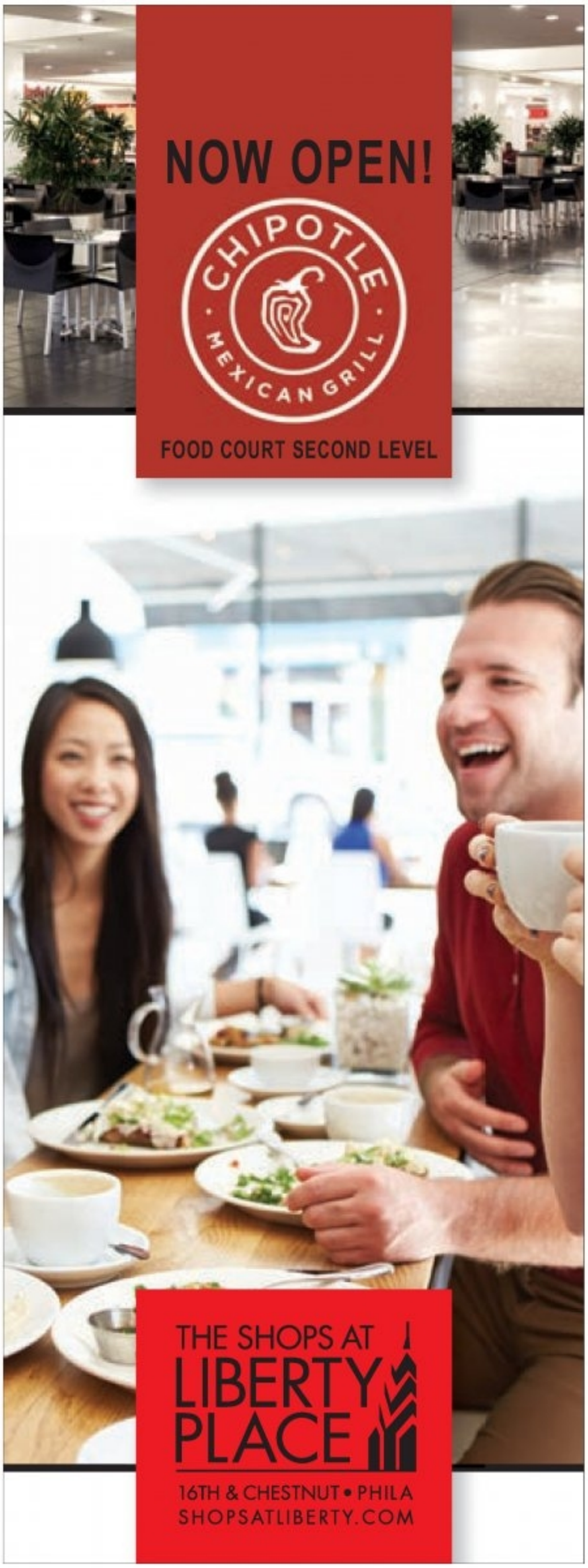

From left: EU's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Deputy Director of the Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia Alexey Karpov, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond and US Secretary of State John Kerry. / GETTY IMAGES

Kerry says he stands by presentation of Iran nuclear deal

Iran. The secretary of state defends the agreement on the nuclear deal.

Secretary of State John Kerry defended on Sunday his presentation of a framework agreement on Iran's nuclear program after a different interpretation was offered by Iran's supreme leader, and a prominent U.S. senator said Kerry was "delusional."

"I will stand by every fact that I have said," Kerry told ABC's "This Week."

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had strong words last week about Iran's agreement with major world powers, declaring that once a final deal was reached it should result in an immediate end to all sanctions on Iran.

Kerry has said the sanctions would be suspended in phases.

"You know, they're going to put their spin on their point of view, and obviously they'll allege that we're putting a spin on our point of view," Kerry said of the Iranian comments.

There were also differing U.S. and Iranian interpretations of a previous interim agreement with Iran, but Iran upheld that agreement, Kerry said.

Iran and major world powers — the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China — reached a framework nuclear agreement on April 2 that would curb Iran's nuclear program and prevent it from being able to develop a bomb, in exchange for the West lifting economic sanctions. Iran has long maintained its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. REUTERS

Quoted

"You know, they're going to put their spin on their point of view, and obviously they'll allege that we're putting a spin on our point of view." Kerry

Friendly fire

Kerry to address naysayers in Congress

Kerry noted that President Barack Obama on Saturday delivered a public rebuke to Republican Sen. John McCain for having called Kerry "delusional" in an interview in which McCain questioned whether Kerry was being forthcoming about the deal.

Kerry added that Russia, not a U.S. ally, had issued a statement saying that the facts about the deal as expressed by the United States were "reliable and accurate information."

Kerry, who will brief Congress on the deal on Monday and Tuesday, warned lawmakers not to put in place any conditions that would impede implementation of the Iran deal. The framework is meant to be the basis of a final agreement to be reached by the end of June.

Congress is poised to advance a bipartisan bill to give lawmakers the right to review any final deal and to have a vote on whether sanctions imposed by Congress should be suspended.

Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez, a co-author of the bill, on Sunday did not rule out that senators would change a provision that has irritated the Obama administration. It would require the administration to certify that Iran is not involved in terrorism attacks against the U.S. REUTERS

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Five things you need to know

1 Bomb attacks in Egypt kill 13

Two separate bomb attacks targeting security forces in Egypt's Sinai peninsula killed at least 13 people and wounded dozens on Sunday, the latest in a wave of violence in a region hit by an Islamist insurgency.

Egypt's military said a roadside bomb detonated by militants killed six soldiers and wounded two others in an attack on an armored military vehicle in the town of Sheikh Zuweid. Two of those killed were officers, it said.

The army said in a statement that "terrorist and extremist elements" were behind the blast and that two of those killed were officers.

Later Sunday, a car bomb targeting a police station in al-Arish, the capital of the North Sinai governorate, killed at least seven people and wounded 44, medical sources said. REUTERS

Residents gather outside a police station in El-Arish after it was targeted by a car bomb. / GETTY IMAGES

2 Obama meets Raul Castro

President Barack Obama met Cuban President Raul Castro on Saturday in the highest-level talks between the two countries in nearly 60 years, and the two men agreed to push ahead on improving relations after decades of hostility.

Describing their private meeting as "historic," Obama said the two countries can now end the antagonism of the Cold War era, although he said he would continue to pressure the communist-led country on democracy and human rights.

They met in Panama, where they both attended a summit of leaders from across the Americas. REUTERS

3 Boy survives fall into cheetah pen

A 2-year-old boy fell into a cheetah pen at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and hurt his leg after his mother dropped him but the wild predators in the enclosure did not approach him, zoo officials said on Saturday.

The child's mother was holding him over an observation wall abutting the enclosure when she dropped him, said Metroparks Zoo spokeswoman Sanaa Julien. REUTERS

4 S.C. man shot by cop mourned

Hundreds of mourners, including prominent South Carolina politicians, attended the funeral on Saturday of Walter Scott, an African-American father of four who was shot in the back while running from a white patrolman.

The body of the slain Coast Guard veteran, whose death was filmed by a bystander, was carried in a flag-draped casket past a crowd assembled outside the W.O.R.D. Ministries Christian Center in Summerville, north of North Charleston, where the shooting took place on April 4.

Scott's death reignited a public outcry over police treatment of African-Americans. REUTERS

5 Apple Watch deliveries backlogged

Customers preordering Apple's smartwatch will have to wait at least a month for delivery, a sign of strong early demand for company chief Tim Cook's first new major product.

People flocked to Apple's stores around the world to get a close-up look at the Apple Watch, Apple's foray into the personal luxury goods market, with Apple predicting demand would exceed supply at product launch. REUTERS

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Should conversion

Interview. Dr. Michael Friedman explains what you need to know about this "harmful" practice.

Friedman / DR. MICHAEL FRIEDMAN

President Barack Obama called for an end to conversion therapy for LGBT youths on Wednesday. Though he did not call for a federal law banning the practice, he did make a statement through his adviser Valerie Jarrett that conversion therapy is "neither medically nor ethically appropriate and can cause substantial harm." We talked to Dr. Michael Friedman, Ph.D., about how conversion therapy is administered and what President Obama's statement means for LGBT youths.

Can you tell me more about conversion therapy?

Everything about gay conversion therapy is based on a false premise. It starts off with the false premise that there's something wrong with being gay, bi or trans, and that's probably the most powerful message of this treatment. There was a time where being gay was considered a mental disorder, and this was decades ago, but that premise that there's something wrong with LGBT is false. There's no evidence that there's anything wrong with being LGBT — there's no psychological or medical problem.

Secondly, there's no evidence that sexuality is a choice or something that can be changed. And the third false is most profound: There's absolutely no evidence that this works. There's none that's been presented in front of respected research institutions — it would be rejected by most ethics boards.

There are false premises and a false promise. Everything about this approach is based on a lie. What is true, though, is that this approach — both the philosophy and practice — is something that is very much akin to other forms of discrimination and bullying that LGBT people face. They're showing that there's something wrong with being LGBT and that it's a choice. These are all different aspects of discrimination. It's basically bullying masquerading as medical

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therapy be banned?

practice.

There are parents and medical organizations and other organizations that support this kind of treatment that are all basically doing to children what everyday schoolyard bullies do to make them feel bad about being LGBT and in some cases, subjecting them to horrible things.

So we've talked about the premise — what is the practice?

It can vary. Historically there was a premise that there's a problem — it's one of the common psychoanalytic theories – that a gay person had an overbearing mother and distant father. If that were the case, everybody would be gay. So there were theories that hadn't been proven.

They'd use psychoanalytic therapy to uncover the conflict that is somehow leading you to be LGBT; it could be that kind of therapy. There's aversion therapy, where you try to pair same-sex images with something that's physically not pleasurable or disgusting. There's the "pray your gay away" approach with ongoing counseling. There's a range of different practices that might be used; some may not seem harmful except when you go to the underlying premise that there's something wrong with being gay and let's do something to change that. That ongoing exposure is very harmful. People use that as a rationale for saying it's wrong to be gay or gay people should be denied rights. It does more harm than good and there's no evidence that it works.

What are some of the harmful effects?

One thing that's important to recognize is that most of this is anecdotal. No one will fund this kind of study. When we're talking about the harmful effects, a lot of it is on people who have been through it or face other forms of discrimination. You can consider it a form of bullying — so there's depression, suicidal thoughts, anxiety, low self-esteem — all things you'd expect if you're told something innate about you that's wrong and there's an underlying psychological problem that you have and you spend tons and tons of time trying to change it. You can understand why most people who have gone through ex-gay experiences of them report that it was psychologically damaging.

ANDREA PARK
@andreapark
andrea.park@metro.us

Consequences

What do you think the impact will be?

I'm hoping it will be on multiple levels. There are millions of LGBT kids and adults out there who have been told there's something wrong with them. I hope this at the very least is a powerful statement from the president of the United States saying there's nothing wrong with you; you don't need to change; you're good the way you are.

That in and of itself is an incredibly powerful and important message. That's huge – that's not been said before by a sitting president. I think he's also bringing to light that every major organization condemns this practice and the more people hear that, the more they're like, "Oh, it's not just the president giving his belief; let's look into it; there's no evidence of this. It's not a mental health disorder."

I think that's a powerful message to LGBT people and non-LGBT people that this is a charade and the light is being shined on it.

Quoted

"Every major organization that studies this issue has said this is a practice that has no evidence that it works and it causes harm. People are understanding what the president was saying, that we as a society recognize that it's one thing if an adult makes a choice and it's another if a kid does."

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2 CULTURE

Twitter feed

Today, Russell Simmons wants you to check yourself, Joan Collins has hometown pride, Dana Delany is disappointed in everyone and Mike Epps is covering all of his bases.

@UncleRUSH:
You have no right to judge others.

@joancollinsobe:
London cabs are best in the world By far, And so are the drivers

@DanaDelany:
People really don't dress for the symphony anymore.

@TheRealMikeEpps:
S/O to anyone who's been through it, going thru it & got thru it! Stay up & stay blessed y'all.

They're bringing baby back ... from the hospital. / ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

1 The Timber-baby has cometh

Glad tidings to the Biel-Timberlake household, as Jessica Biel gave birth to her and husband Justin Timberlake's first baby — a boy — late last week, according to People magazine. The new parents are "ecstatic" about the new arrival, named Silas Randall Timberlake — which, as celebrity baby names go, is pretty damn reasonable. The couple reportedly kept the sex of the baby a surprise until the actual arrival, which is adorable but must've made shopping for baby shower gifts a nightmare. Last we heard from Timberlake was at the iHeartRadio Music Awards on March 29, when he offered a message straight to Biel from the stage: "I can't wait to see our greatest creation yet," he said while accepting the Innovator Award. "Daddy's heading home right now to innovate by learning how to change a poopy diaper and get my swaddle on."

2 Bieber has a warrant in Argentina

Try as he might to mount a full-on character rehabilitation tour, Justin Bieber's messy past just won't leave him alone. For instance, there's now a warrant out for his arrest in Argentina, with a judge in Buenos Aires ordering that the Canadian pop terror be locked up should he ever step foot in the country again. The order stems from a 2013 incident during which Bieber and one of his bodyguards allegedly attacked a photographer while the "Baby" singer was leaving a nightclub. Another judge had ordered Bieber to appear for questioning about it back in November, he apparently didn't get the message. So wait, how many countries is Bieber not allowed back to anymore at this point?

Even Argentina has its limits.

THE WORD

Ned Ehrbar takes on the world of gossip.

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3 Blake Lively's baby does not have three godmothers

So that story about how Blake Lively had named all three of her "Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants" co-stars as godmothers for her new daughter, James? Yeah, not so much. "I never named them my godmothers. They're my dear friends. I would say my baby has a lot of fairy godmothers," she clarifies to E! News. Also worth noting: Fairy godmotherhood is not legally binding. Yet. But give it time.

A SISTERHOOD HAS ITS LIMITS.

Daily video

It's 'Game of Thrones' ... for kids!

We wouldn't put it past George R.R. Martin to do something like this in real life: The ever-procrastinating author teams up with "Conan" to make an intro song for a hypothetical "Game of Thrones" cartoon series for kids called "Lil Thrones" — except it's really not for kids at all, of course. Or for people who are behind on the series, because, hello spoilers. Still, super-catchy and adorable.

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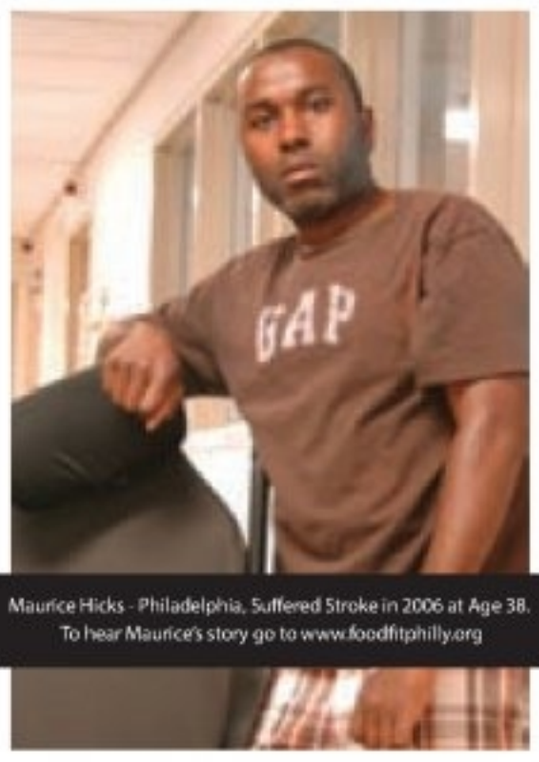

Maurice Hicks - Philadelphia, Suffered Stroke in 2006 at Age 38.
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Megan Bridge encouraged the dancers to respond to the words with physical movement. / HOPE DAVIS

Dancing to 'Dust'

FringeArts. Megan Bridge took on the challenge of choreographing a text-heavy opera.

When choreographer Megan Bridge first heard composer Robert Ashley's 1998 opera "Dust," she immediately fell in love with the music but didn't envision dancing to it. Usually dismissive of combining text with dance, Bridge couldn't see a way to work with the text-heavy opera, which was inspired by the ramblings of homeless people in New York City.

"It was always just something that I liked to listen to," Bridge says. "But over the years, I became more and more intrigued by it and started to feel physical responses in my own body to the sound of it. Then in 2012, I opened my inbox and found an email from Robert Ashley, which was one of the most amazing moments in my life."

As it turns out, Ashley was trying to reach Bridge's husband and collaborator, composer/electronic musician Peter Price. But as she forwarded the message, she also broached the subject of choreographing "Dust." As she recalls, "He wrote back and said, 'No one has ever danced to "Dust." Good luck.' I took that as a challenge — or at least permission."

The end result of that process debuts this weekend as FringeArts presents the premiere, featuring five dancers as well as video design by Price, which in the show's first half responds automatically to the dancers' movements via infrared sensors. In its second half, Price will control the video, improvising live in response to the dance.

Given the density of Ashley's original libretto, Bridge chose not to attempt to tell the story of the opera but encouraged the dancers to respond to the pure sound of the words.

While Ashley granted his permission for Bridge to pursue her version of "Dust," he passed away last March before it was completed. His death, Bridge says, "gave the whole project higher stakes. Now it's not just a little project that he approved; all of a sudden, it became a continuation of his legacy."

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Sharp dressed hitman

Q&A. Simon Pegg suits up for "Kill Me Three Times."

When he's not starring in — and writing — "Star Trek" sequels or marveling at Tom Cruise's stunts in the "Mission: Impossible" films, Simon Pegg likes to relax and unwind in far-off locations like Perth, Australia, and put a few locals out of their misery. Or at least that's what he does as Charlie, a dapper contract killer in "Kill Me Three Times."

My favorite description of Australia is "the most beautiful place in the world that's always trying to kill you." Agree or disagree?
[Laughs] I didn't suffer any attacks when I was there, but yeah, there's quite a lot of deadly stuff there. We were aware that there has been a couple of fatal shark attacks on the coast where we were going to shoot a couple of surfing scenes, where Alice [Braga] and Luke [Hemsworth] were going in. So I was a little worried for them, but there was, thankfully, no assault on our lives.

Speaking of Luke, he's the older brother of Chris and Liam Hemsworth. Exactly how many Hemsworths are there out there, and how do we stop them?
I don't know. I feel like they multiply, but I think Luke is probably the brood mother of them all. He spawned the other Hemsworths, and who knows how many there are? I don't know. Luke was very vague about the amount of Hemsworths there are in the world. [Laughs] No, Luke is super-cool. And it's sweet when he talks about his brothers. He's obviously very proud of them and protective of them, and he's clearly the biggest of the three — albeit the stockiest, not the tallest.

How was it being one of the only non-Australian outsiders in this?
It was good. I mean, it felt kind of important to us that Charlie was a strange invader. He's a very incongruous figure in the film. He's incredibly conspicuous, and he doesn't really try not to be. He drives a f—ing huge car, and he wears a black suit and dresses like he thinks a hitman should dress. It's a fun thing to casually walk up a sand dune wearing a Paul Smith suit carrying a rifle. You don't get to do that in real life very often.

It's very James Bond. You're also rocking quite the handlebar mustache in this. How does it stack up against your other onscreen facial hair experiments?
It's a good one. It's perfect for the character. It's not entirely flattering, but it just felt right. It's a statement that Charlie makes about himself and his face.

Simon Pegg rocks proper desert attire in the black comedy "Kill Me Three Times." / MAGNET RELEASING

And I take it you've been enjoying the responses to the new "Mission: Impossible" trailer.
Yes! That was exciting. We only wrapped the shoot a few weeks ago, so it was funny to suddenly see a trailer come out. Everything in the trailer, I think, we shot before Christmas, so there's plenty of stuff that's not in it that's still to be seen. I think Tom [Cruise] has pretty much trumped everyone now by hanging off a plane. [Laughs] Like, "OK, you're next. What are you going to do? Hang off a rocket?"

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'ACTRESS' WILL CHANGE HOW YOU THINK ABOUT DOCUMENTARIES

"The Wire"'s Brandy Burre surrenders herself to the experimental doc "Actress." / CINEMA GUILD

Documentary

'Actress'

Netflix Instant

Documentary for some may be a form of journalism. But you won't learn much from "Actress," Robert Greene's remarkable documentary profile of Brandy Burre. That's a good thing; docs should be thought of as a more diverse field. You might recognize Burre from "The Wire." (She was crafty campaign manager Theresa D'Agostino.) She quit acting to be a stay-at-home mom, and when "Actress" catches up with her, she's thinking of getting back in the game but acutely aware producers aren't crazy about middle-aged women. But not everything it shows is real, though it's no mere puzzle to be solved. What's moving about "Actress" is the way it captures how we all construct fake versions of ourselves, and not just to show others. MATT PRIGGE

Comedy

'The Big Lebowski'

Netflix Instant

The Coen brothers' predictably unpredictable follow-up to the Oscar-gobbling "Fargo" is one of the great cases of a film rediscovered on home video, when people could endlessly rewatch it. So if you can't find your scratched-up DVD from the year 2000, you can abide with the high-def version that now streams.

Criterion Collection

'A Day in the Country'

Hulu

Jean Renoir's 1936 short is one of cinema's perfect films, but it's amazing it exists at all. Renoir was forced to abandon it before completion, and it was stitched together years later. You'd never know: What starts out as a fun picnic romp smoothly evolves into a profound look at memory and lost chances.

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WINTER IS BACK: 'GAME OF THRONES' RETURNS

Tyrion is having a rough time this season. / MACALL B. POLAY, HBO

"Thrones" on the web

WINTER IS COMING

As the editor-in-chief for Winter Is Coming, Dan Selcke spends his time writing about the latest "Game of Thrones" news and preparing for the long night that will have no end. Read more of him at **Winteriscoming.net**.

At last, the fifth season of "Game of Thrones" is upon us. The opening episode, "The Wars to Come," finds the characters picking up the pieces after Season 4's finale. It looks like this season will be a bit slower and more contemplative than last year, but it'll still pack in plenty of the textured storytelling that has made the show a hit.

Episode MVPs

After killing his father and lover at the end of last season, Tyrion Lannister (Peter Dinklage) has gone into exile. The guy has hit rock bottom, and Dinklage has a great time scowling, drinking and snarking his way through his scenes. Dinklage has always been one of the show's best assets, and his take on the new, more dour Tyrion is already a highlight.

Meanwhile, at the Wall, Jon Snow (Kit Harington) is dealing with the arrival of Stannis Baratheon (Stephen Dillane) and his hangers-on. For the first

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Jon Snow is spending some quality time with Stannis Baratheon. / HELEN SLOAN, HBO

time in a while, the Wall isn't in danger of attack, so there's room to just let these personalities bounce off each other.

Further east, Daenerys Targaryen (Emilia Clarke) is trying to manage local unrest in Meereen, her new base of operations. While past seasons had her marching from place to place, freeing slaves and siccing her dragons on the unwary, her new story looks like a slow burner.

Questions for next week

"The Wars to Come" was stuffed with story, but Arya Stark (Maisie Williams) sat it out.

We'll have to wait to find out what happened to everyone's favorite revenge-bent moppet after she boarded that boat to Braavos. It'll also be interesting to see whether Cersei Lannister (Lena Headey) can keep the Seven Kingdoms running smoothly now that her father is dead. She's got a short fuse and holds onto grudges like they're old friends, so smart money is on no.

Finally, I'm eager to see the show make good on this episode's promise that Tyrion will meet up with Daenerys. "Game of Thrones" often keeps its various plotlines on parallel tracks, so the prospect of two big ones crossing is very exciting.

Remakes

In other news

Those who still can't get enough "Game of Thrones" may be happy to hear there's an Indian remake coming called "Rani Mahal." Producers have already cast the Indian equivalents of Jon Snow, Cersei and Daenerys, and they hope to air the series later this year.

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SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
FISCAL YEAR 2016 CAPITAL BUDGET

I. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) will conduct public hearings in the SEPTA Board Room at SEPTA Headquarters, 1234 Market Street, Mezzanine Level, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107, at 11:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., on Tuesday, April 28, 2015. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the Authority's proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Capital Budget and Fiscal Years 2016-2027 Capital Program and the projects contained therein for which financial assistance is being sought. The total amount of federal and state funds to be received in Fiscal Year 2016 will be determined at the completion of the federal and state budget processes. SEPTA proposes to submit to its funding agencies a program of projects for funding consideration. SEPTA's final federal Section 5307 Program of Projects will be made available through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and in conjunction with the DVRPC's Public Involvement Process for the TIP.

II. At the hearings, SEPTA will afford an opportunity for interested persons or agencies to be heard with respect to the social, economic and environmental aspects of the projects. Interested persons may submit orally, or in writing, evidence and recommendations. Speakers for the morning and evening sessions must register by 12:30 PM and 5:30 PM, respectively, on the day of the Public Hearings.

III. Persons wishing to file written comments may forward them to the Director of the Capital Budget and Grant Development Department, 9th Floor, 1234 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-3780. Comments must be received by May 4, 2015, so that they may be forwarded to the Hearing Examiner. Comments may also be sent via email to capbudget@septa.org.

IV. Individuals in need of a sign language interpreter should contact the Director of the Capital Budget and Grant Development Department, at the address listed above by April 14, 2015.

V. An audio version of the public hearing notice and summary will be available through the Associated Services for the Blind's website at www.asb.org and at the office of the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 919 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.

VI. On or about March 30, 2015, members of the public may obtain a copy of the proposed Capital Budget and Program at SEPTA's website www.septa.org or by requesting, in writing, a copy from the Director of the Capital Budget and Grant Development Department at the address listed above.

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TV watch list

DRAMA

'Gotham'

Gordon and Bullock's case this week involves a bad guy known as "The Ogre," and we are really hoping they find a way to work in some Shrek jokes. **8 P.M., FOX**

These two look so film noir in this photo, one of them should definitely be using the word "dame."
JESSICA MIGLIO, FOX

COMEDY

'Mike and Molly'

Molly needs some inspiration for her new book, so she takes a trip with Mike's mom to her hometown, where his mother quickly runs into her estranged sister. That sounds like it should provide plenty of material.
8:30 P.M., CBS

DRAMA

'Turn: Washington's Spies'

The Revolutionary War spy drama returns with a slightly revised name. To start off the second season, Abe decides the time is right to do some spying in New York City. **SEASON PREMIERE, 9 P.M., AMC**

TALK SHOWS

'Jimmy Kimmel Live'

Jimmy has the entire cast of the "Avengers" on tonight, and we're wondering if he's bringing in extra chairs to fit all of those people on the stage. The Avengers are a pretty sizeable crew. **11:35 P.M., ABC**
LISA WEIDENFELD

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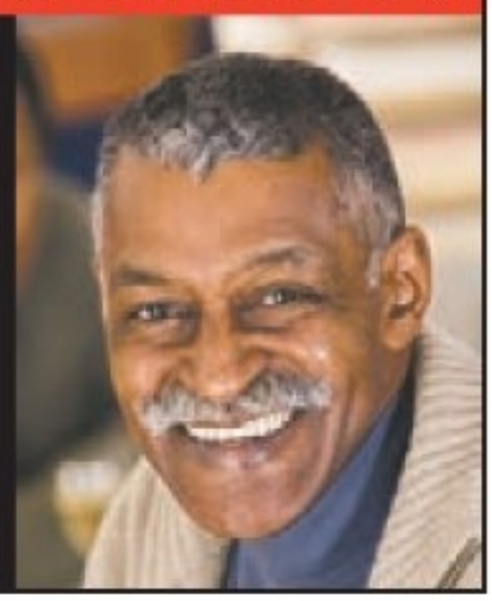

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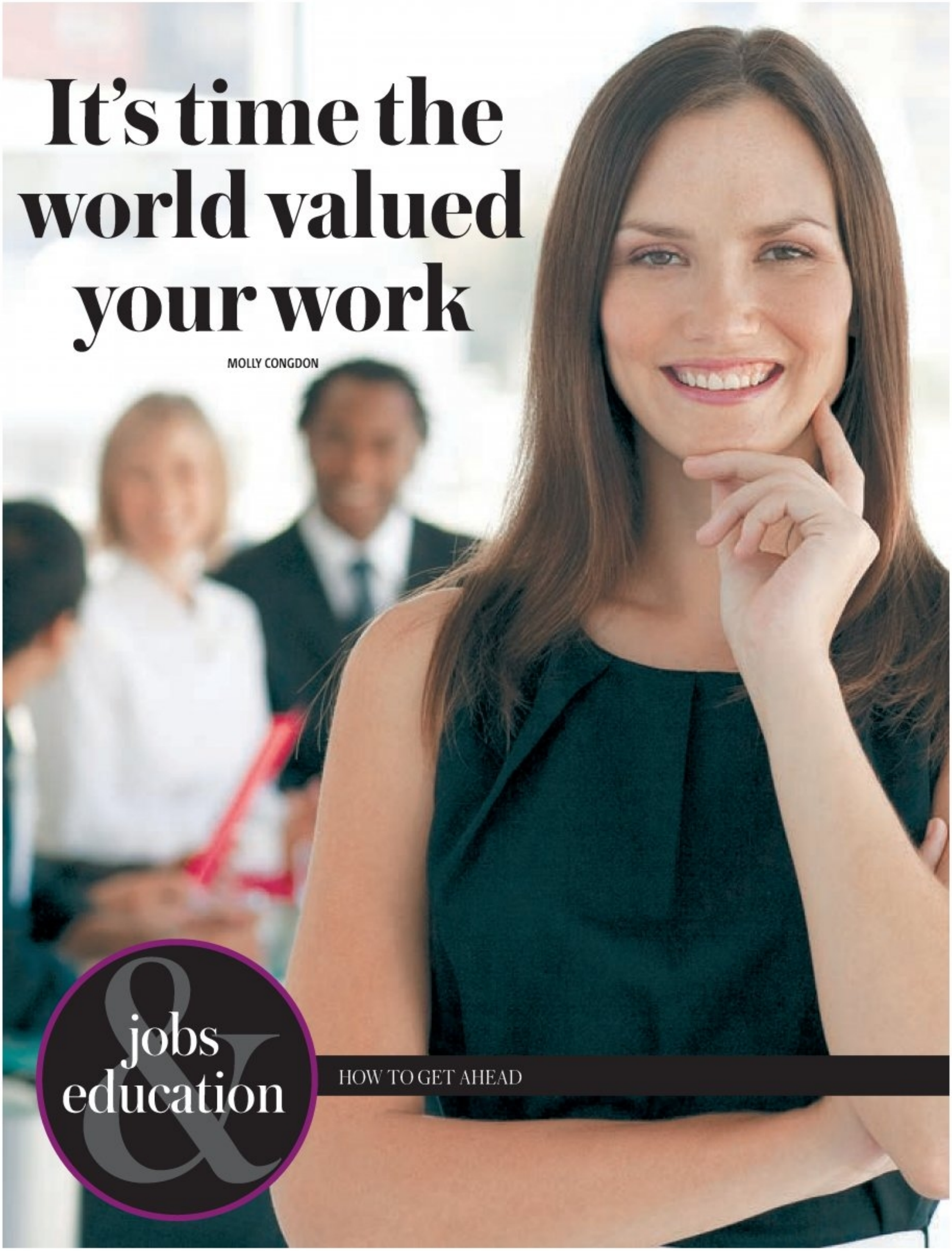

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How to identify a high-impact internship

The ideal internship is one where you can contribute meaningfully. ISTOCK

Don't waste your summers, find a great position instead.

MOLLY CONGDON
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

Internships are not easy, especially if you end up spending most of your summer doing grunt work. That's why Eric Woodard — the author of "The Ultimate Guide to Internships: 100 Steps to Get a Great Internship and Thrive in It" — says students need to target what he calls "high-impact" positions to make sure they are on the path to success.

We asked Woodard for his tips for the best way to get a meaningful internship:

Create a career story

"You have to build career capital," Woodard says. "There's a difference between someone who has a résumé that's all over the place and someone who crafted a story. You want to find an internship that contributes to that story."

Mentorship

"Study after study shows that mentorship is key," Woodard says. "You're almost better off finding the not-so-great internship that's at Bob's Tackle Shop — not the shiniest — but if Bob is the best mentor in the world, that's better than doing an internship at a more impressive company."

Be Yourself

"If you are really genuine in your application, very good internship hosts are going to be attracted to that," Woodard says. "For example, I ran into a situation recently where an applicant wrote us and said, 'Hey, there's an error on your website.' He's putting himself out there — that's brave. That's going to make your résumé a compass to point in the right direction and a magnet to really attract great internships."

Look for signs

"If you're applying to an internship, look for the language they use, and if there's language that talks about how an internship is aimed at developing a student or they care about learning — that's a really good sign," Woodard says. "I can't tell you how many internships are out there that don't even mention that."

Don't be a generalist

"A lot of students are afraid to be specific [on their cover letters or in interviews]," Woodard says. "Political Science or International Affairs is too broad. What you want to do is be the world's expert on Himalayan tectonics as it relates to Nepali women and girls on a Sunday in the rain — that's what makes them very employable."

Be an attention grabber

"Get attention with your applications. You want to stand out," Woodard says. "If you do that, you'll find that the good internships are the ones that are going to notice that you're being remarkable."

Take risks

Don't do everything by the book. "Lots of internships out there are looking for a carbon copy. They take the same students in the same way," Woodard tells us. "The way to attract good internships is to take risks."

You don't have to feel alone when you are overwhelmed. ISTOCK

New app helps overly stressed college students

Freaking out over finals? Here's a new way to find a sympathetic ear to turn to.

MEGHAN POOLE
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

For many students, this time of year is filled with stress and anxiety as they start preparing for finals and lining up their summer plans. While it helps to know that you aren't alone, it's important to take control of your stress.

Psychologist Glen Moriarty believes that college students are more stressed-out today than they were just a few years ago. "There is less support for us today, and we aren't as close as we all used to be," he explains.

To help, Moriarty has created 7 Cups of Tea, a new app that offers emotional support by connecting people with listeners online. The way the free app works is that it connects users with listeners from 150 countries who are willing to help.

We asked Moriarty for some tips for dealing with the stresses of college life:

Talk it out

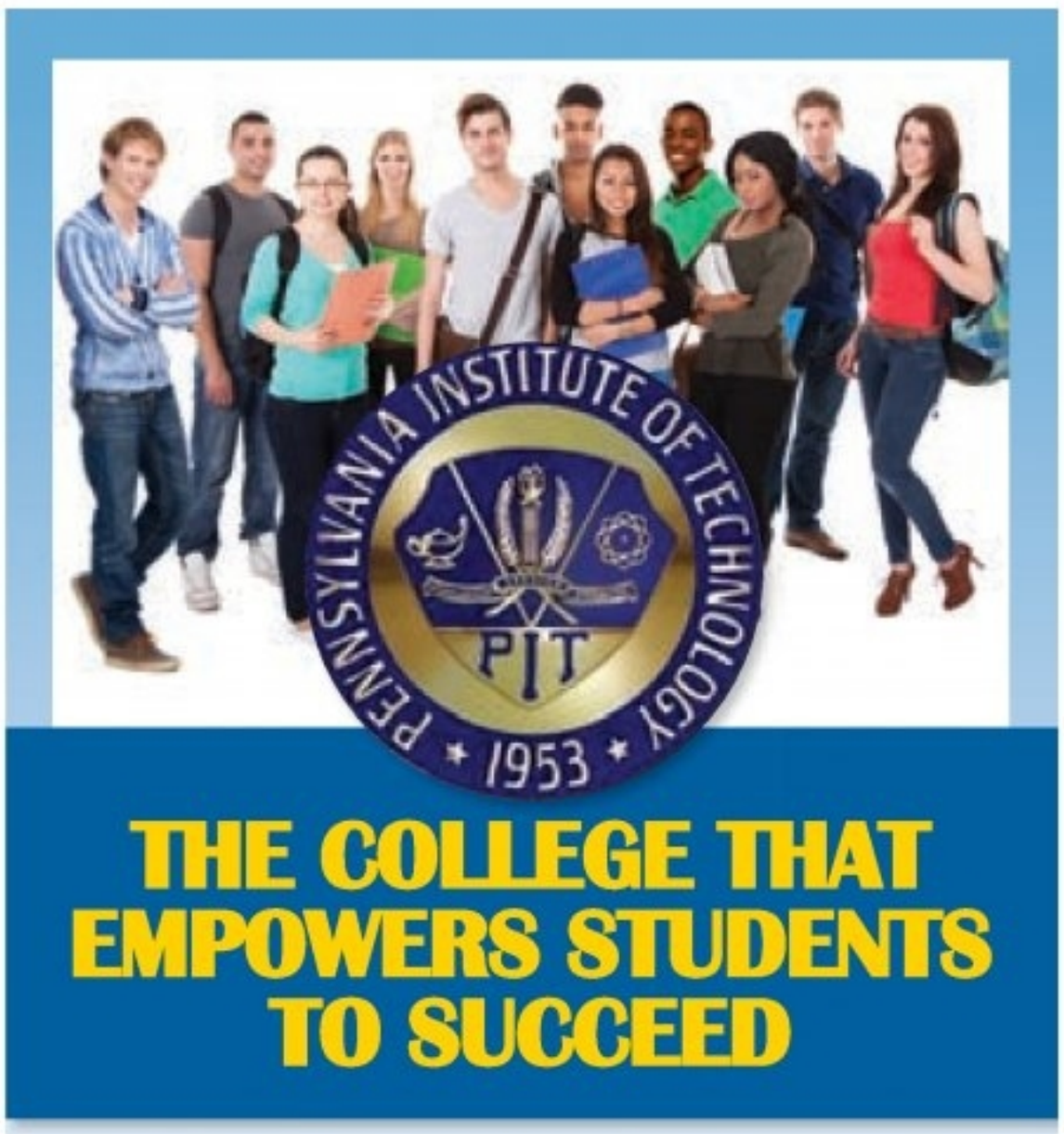
Simply being able to talk to someone can be helpful when dealing with stress or anxiety. This, he says, was the driving force behind 7 Cups of Tea. He believes in the importance of having somewhere to turn when people need to talk. Whether that person is a trained psychologist, a friend or simply anyone who will listen, it will help reduce stress.

Find out what works best for you

When he was a student, Moriarty says that he did multiple things to reduce stress. "I tried to exercise on a regular basis and talked with other friends who were feeling a little stressed too," he says. Different people can deal with stress many ways, but the important thing is that you are facing your problems head-on in a healthy way.

Use group support

7 Cups of Tea also offers group support through chat rooms and forums. "The ultimate idea is to build a mental health system for the Internet and to create a safe place where everyone can feel like they belong," he says. Plus, it may be comforting to realize that other people are going through the same struggles as you are.



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INSIDE HR
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If you've been reluctant to broach salary with your boss, this is your time to shine!

That's because tomorrow is Equal Pay Day. Originating in 1996 as a public awareness event to showcase the gap between men's and women's wages, Tuesday was selected to represent how far into the new workweek women must work to earn the total that men earned by the end of the previous week. Sigh.

According to an American Association for University Women (AAUW) report, in 2013 American women earned 78 cents compared to a dollar earned by men for full-time workers.

Here are some ways to shrink the gap and ask for the bank you deserve:

Ask for more

Wayne Gretzky once said, "You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." What are the odds your boss will approach you and say, "Congratulations, there's extra money in the budget so I'm going to pour it all into your salary"? But what if you take the shots you previously missed by approaching your boss and showing your worth? Schedule a meeting and arrive prepared. Compile accolades you've received and a long list of accomplishments along with the ammo of your current pay and the going rate to state your case. Specifically ask for a percentage increase of your base compensation.

Be realistic

Keep expectations in check — salary review may not occur until the fall or even year's end, so the conversation may feel like a moot point if budgets don't get tapped. It still matters. Get onto your boss' radar screen that you want to earn more, you deserve it and your work, ethic and attitude speak for themselves.

Do some digging

Knowledge is power. Whether or not you reap pay equality in this job, information will bolster you with power as you pound the pavement for the next one. Conduct informational interviews with peers at other companies and attend industry events.

Ask your HR department

Some companies have transparent policies; others have closed doors. It doesn't hurt to ask. You don't need to say why you're asking, though it's pretty much assumed.

Feel entitled and deserving

Hopefully Equal Pay Day will get you thinking more about money and also feeling more entitled to get paid well for a job well done.

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Horoscope

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20
The most important relationships are often the ones that get taken for granted. If you have been neglecting someone, make amends.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21
You can avoid tension in the workplace if you stick to your own duties. Don't get drawn into debates with colleagues if you want to get ahead.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20
Someone will have a profound impact on your life and future. Learn more about a hobby that intrigues you on the Internet.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22
Pay attention to what your friends, family and colleagues want and need. Patience will be required when dealing with elders.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22
Certain people will be extra sensitive today. Diplomacy and tact will ensure that everything goes smoothly. Keep personal matters under your hat.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your commitment and determination will ensure recognition and reward. With your skills and drive, you will achieve success.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22
Children will have a positive effect on your day. Love is on the rise. Turn your focus to romance if you want to improve your personal life.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21 Make positive changes that will make you feel good about your future. A new location or vocation should be considered.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You are getting restless and are in need of a change. Get involved in a group that will provide you with a creative outlet that stimulates your senses.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20 Opportunities for advancement are imminent. Show your versatility if you want to impress people who have power.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18 Don't compromise your standards by telling people what you think they want to hear. You will earn more respect by being truthful.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20
Business, financial or governmental dealings will be troublesome. Keep all your records up to date and close at hand in case of a dispute.

EUGENIA LAST

Sudoku: Easy and hard

9			6		7		1	
5	7	3				2	8	6
			2					
8	2	1				6		
				6				
		5				7	9	2
					9			
1	3	9				8	5	7
	6		1		5			9

		9				2		
			5		9	7	4	
	8		7	2	1			
			4		2	3	9	
			9		6			
	2	6	1		8			
			3	6	7		5	
	4	7	8		5			
		1				8		

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Letters to the editor

Harsh penalties, not death, for criminals

There should never be any death penalty, not even for Tsarnaev — it's too damn good! Instead all felons, not just killers, should become slaves to pay society back:

1) Work like dogs on chain gangs doing jobs we all both need and hate, like separating recyclables from garbage.

2) Give blood regularly to save lives — also half the liver, which grows back.

3) Be guinea pigs for all medical research, thus eliminating all animal testing (how's that, PETA?) and getting new medicines to market 10 years sooner.

4) Have their wills suspended or rescinded — if they die in prison, everything goes to victims first, the state second and all organs go to those who need them. If all this were law, imagine the deterrent effect! J. ANDREW SMITH

Forgotten historical milestone

The Civil War ended on April 9, 1865. President Abraham Lincoln died on April 15. How disappointing that most media failed to report on the 150th anniversary of both. PBS missed a great opportunity to rerun Ken Burns' excellent series on the Civil War. No wonder many have no sense of history for our great nation.

LARRY PENNER, VIA EMAIL

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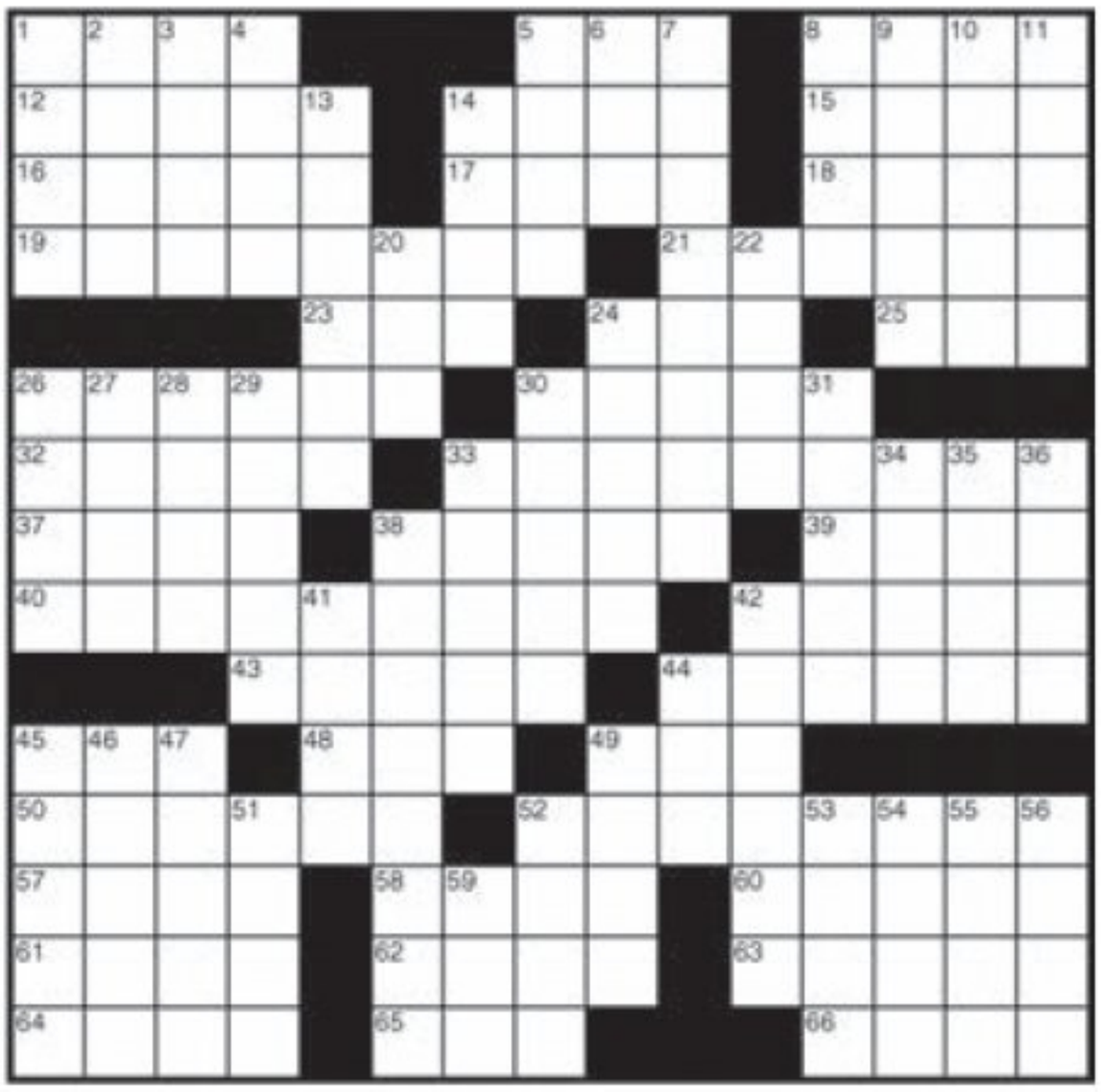
Crossword

Across
1 Quiet
5 Cal Tech rival
8 Oil-lamp cord
12 Diva's tunes
14 Mongolian desert
15 As to (2 wds.)
16 Daybreak
17 Entree choice
18 Long stopover
19 Of Henry VIII's church
21 Mammals' epoch
23 Youngster
24 Body part
25 Took by the hand
26 Greeted the dog
30 Rap sheet info
32 Severity
33 What a sand dollar is (2 wds.)
37 Wednesday's god
38 Sorbonne site
39 Waikiki's island
40 Very slim (hyph.)
42 Edible bulb
43 TV's — Gillis
44 Punks
45 Passport datum
48 Frankenstein milieu
49 Good times
50 Long overcoat
52 Circling the globe
57 One of a sinkful
58 Reputation
60 Auto-safety advocate
61 Hunch
62 Volt or watt
63 Troll's cousin
64 Dispatched
65 Gym pad
66 Traffic sign

Down
1 Home, to Jose
2 Make — — for it
3 Duck tail?
4 Heavy hammer
5 Ghostly noise
6 "Big Blue"
7 Captain James — Kirk
8 Madison loc.
9 PC chip maker
10 I-beam lifter
11 Entered data
13 Volleyball player, at times
14 Not sad
20 Medieval hero El —
22 FitzGerald's poet
24 Delon of film
26 Freighter front
27 Verdi opus
28 Letters of relief
29 Firmed up
30 Hawk's refuge
31 Tea cake
33 Bwana, in India
34 Salon's concern
35 Flapjack chain
36 Wimple wearers
38 Circus man (2 wds.)
41 Cameo, maybe
42 Holding the deed
44 Round container
45 Autobahn vehicles
46 Coast along
47 German industrial center
49 Fume
51 — does it!
52 Not mention
53 Ecru and beige
54 Elvis, to some
55 Verne captain
56 Got taller
59 Santa — winds

Weekend's answer



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3 SPORTS

So close ...

Phils can't come back again

A day after the Phillies shocked Washington with a walk-off Saturday night victory, the Phillies once again closed a gap to tie Sunday's game at 2. But after relenting two 10th-inning runs, Philly could only muster one of its own in a 4-3 loss. The Phillies finish their series against the NL East favorite Nationals at 3-3. Cody Asche had three hits in the Sunday setback.

Phillies at .500: Is there any hope for a surprise?

MLB. The Phillies almost swept the NL pennant favorite Nationals this weekend.

Odubel Hererra's first MLB hit was a walk-off double Saturday night against Washington. / GETTY IMAGES

Nearly a year has passed since the Phillies were above the .500 mark. Thanks to Odubel Herrera's walk-off double Saturday against the struggling Washington Nationals, the Phillies moved above the mediocrity mark for the first time since last May.

A six-game home stand is a small sample set, but can the Phillies play competitive ball this season?

"If things break right, maybe," an NL scout said. "If Herrera can hit in the majors like he did in the minors. If [Jeff] Francoeur finds himself and [David] Buchanan pitches his well in the spring and Freddy Galvis keeps it up, who knows? But we're talking a lot of ifs. Maybe the Phillies will be better than many expected, which is saying maybe they can be better than the worst team in baseball but the reality is that the standings during the first week of the season are often very different than how the standings are during the last week of the season."

Good point. The Braves, Rockies, Diamondbacks and Reds are among the division leaders. Each of those teams are expected to struggle as much as the Phillies. The NL East order is the inverse of what is expected during the first week of October.

But the Phillies are offering glimmers of hope. Ryne Sandberg's team came back twice against a Nationals team, which is missing some key parts, Denard Span, Jayson Werth and Anthony Rendon. But plucky wins are wins.

When Herrera, who has won minor league batting titles and was the best story in Clearwater in March, stepped to the plate against Tanner Roark, it felt like the 23-year old Venezuelan was due for his first major league hit. It didn't make sense but there was a smiling Herrera after the game speaking via a familiar translator [Juan Samuel] with the remnants of shaving cream in his dreadlocks.

"I"m very pleased that my first hit was a big one," Herrera said. "

Herrera, a natural second baseman, is holding his own as a center fielder and who may heat up offensively when the temperature climbs.

There are a number of bright spots for the Phillies. The aforementioned Francoeur has had some big hits, Ryan Howard, who missed a game-tying homer by inches Saturday night, has three doubles.

Howard hit the ball hard every time Saturday night. Cole Hamels bounced back from his miserable opening day start against the Red Sox to pitch very well against the Nats. Hamels fastball location still isn't there but his changeup baffled the Nats all night.

There are a lot of positives out on the field for the Phillies already — more than many fans expected.

Stay tuned.

ED CONDRAN
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Quoted

"I think we're going to surprise people. We can play. Just watch."

Ben Revere

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Flyers finish unusual season

NHL. The Flyers missed the postseason for just the third time in 20 seasons.

The Philadelphia Flyers last game of the regular season on Saturday against the Ottawa Senators had major playoff implications.

Too bad none of them involved the Flyers.

The Senators clinched the first wild card and a first-round date with the Canadians with their 3-1 win. The Flyers, on the other hand, were playing for pride and as spoilers. Their dismal season with ended at 33-31-18 for 84 points, fortunately, is over.

Even still, let's take a look back at some highs, lows and oddities of the last 82 games.

ERIC GOLDSTEIN
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Biggest win

A 3-2 win over Pittsburgh on Jan. 20. The Flyers defeated their arch-rivals in overtime on Claude Giroux's power play goal in a wildly entertaining game that featured four spirited fights in the second period. The team went 6-0-3 over their next nine games and climbed back into the playoff race.

Somehow, the Flyers swept the season series with the Penguins for the first time in more than 30 seasons. / ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Most confusing streak

Over the final two months of the year, the Flyers compiled a stretch of hockey that was near impossible to predict and near impossible to duplicate. They went an unexplainable 0-7-5 against teams that weren't headed to the playoffs while conversely posting a mind-boggling 11-2-4 mark against teams that were headed to the playoffs.

"I'm mystified, for sure," coach Craig Berube said after Thursday's loss to the Hurricanes.

It is arguably this unusual feat that would cost the Flyers the opportunity to vie for a playoff spot.

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without trip to NHL playoffs

MASON SOLIDIFIED HIMSELF AS THE FLYERS' GOALIE OF THE FUTURE.

Most shocking statistics

Somehow goalie Steve Mason finished with as many road wins as he had road shutouts — and neither of the shutouts resulted in a win.

Before he won in Pittsburgh on April 1, Mason was in danger of actually finishing the season with fewer wins on the road than shutouts — which came in 1-0 shootout losses.

The other peculiar stat belonged to captain Claude Giroux, who didn't score an even-strength goal at home until March 26 against the Blackhawks in home Game 36.

R.J. Umberger: Flyers' least valuable player

The diminutive forward was a complete bust after arriving in a trade from Columbus for fan-favorite Scott Hartnell.

His production was much lower than expected. He finished with nine goals, six assists and was a minus-9 in 75 games before being shut down for the season due to an injury.

Umberger did not bring the Flyers the offense they expected from him after the off-season trade.

Worst loss

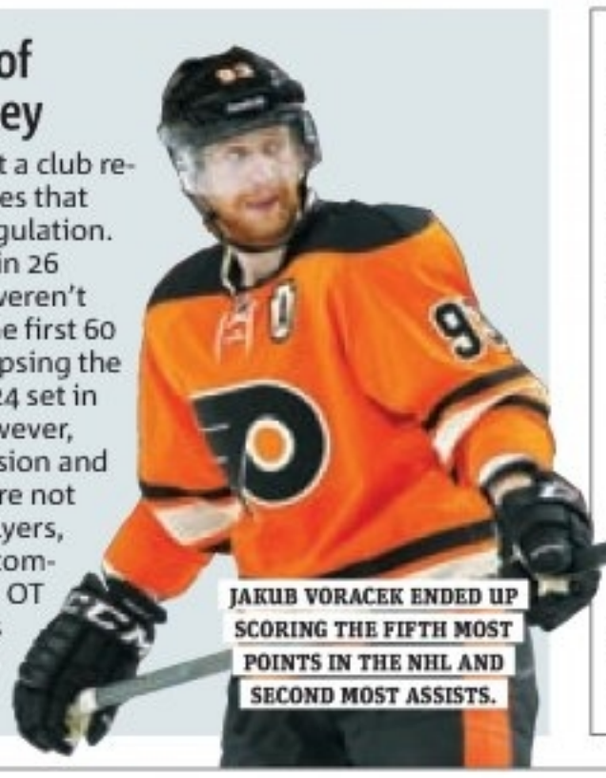
A 3-2 loss to Boston on March 7, when they gave up a game-tying goal with 14 seconds left in the third period and lost in overtime. Rather than climb to within two points of the Bruins, who held the final playoff berth, the Flyers were five points back and they never recovered. Berube's bunch went 5-6-6 down the stretch.

The sellout streak ends

With the team's performance on the ice and in the standings taking a dip, so did the attendance. The team's sellout streak came to an end on Feb. 5, breaking a span of 175 straight sellouts that started on Nov. 18, 2010. It was an empty house that applauded the Flyers after their season-ending loss Saturday.

The year of free hockey

The Flyers set a club record for games that went past regulation. They played in 26 games that weren't decided in the first 60 minutes, eclipsing the old mark of 24 set in 1998-99. However, the extra session and shootout were not kind to the Flyers, who were a combined 8-18 in OT and the skills competition.



JAKUB VORACEK ENDED UP SCORING THE FIFTH MOST POINTS IN THE NHL AND SECOND MOST ASSISTS.

Ray Emery: Player least likely to return

The backup goalie, who is not signed for next year, was not terrible but too inconsistent. He typically followed up a strong outing with a couple of clunkers and Berube appeared to lose confidence in him midway through the year.

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2D125 Tasheka Hollis, 2D222 George Brown,
2D230 Anisha Green, 3A21D Dana Bowen,
3A263 Netosh A Jones, 3A37 Elizabeth Orafidiya,
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